US EPA RE-Powering Feasibility Studies

2011 Request for Applications (RFA)

RE-POWERING AND THE U.S. EPA

Through its *RE-Powering America's Land: Siting Renewable Energy on Potentially Contaminated Land and Mine Sites* initiative, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting applications from states, tribes, regional governments, and communities that want to evaluate the potential development of renewable energy on potentially or formerly contaminated properties. This evaluation will be in the form of a feasibility study conducted by the Department of Energy National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) that will determine the best renewable energy technology for the site, the optimal location for placement of the renewable energy technology, potential energy generating capacity, the return on the investment, and the economic feasibility of the renewable energy projects.

The purpose of the technical assistance is to reuse sites, improve communities, create jobs, develop partnerships, decrease the use of greenspace for siting renewable energy, and increase the amount of renewable energy generated. EPA also plans to write case studies based on the technical assistance, and develop a body of knowledge of the unique aspects of siting renewable energy on contaminated sites that can be applied to other projects.

EPA will provide technical assistance to successful applicants as described below. Eligible entities are tribal, local, regional, and state governments and nonprofit organizations that have a demonstrated partnership with a governmental entity.

The feasibility study will evaluate the technical and economic opportunities and challenges at the sites. It will:

- Provide a preliminary analysis of the economic and physical viability of the site;
- Review the economics, capital costs, and payback period of the proposed system(s);
- Assess renewable resource availability;
- Identify possible system size, design and location;
- Highlight financing options such as cost/benefit, return on investment, and available incentives/rebates/stimulus (timeframe of their availability),
- Estimate number of jobs created; and
- Estimate GHG Emission Reductions.

Renewable energy types that will be considered are Solar Photovoltaic (PV), concentrated solar power (CSP), wind, biorefinery (from wood or crop waste), biopower (from wood or crop waste), and geothermal. For Brownfield and Superfund sites, these feasibility studies are used to help determine the potential future use of the site which informs the assessment and remedy decisions. For example, this information helps inform remedy decisions and design by providing information on the best place to site renewable energy on the property.

EPA prefers applications for utility or commercial scale renewable projects. Also preferred are applications for renewable energy opportunities located directly on the site instead of placement on a building at the site.

This technical assistance is not available to determine renewable energy feasibility for projects where the renewable energy would be going primarily to power the cleanup of the site.

The applicant must form a team to work with EPA/NREL and to follow up on the feasibility study and technical assistance. This informal team could include representatives from relevant sectors, including the site owner or representative, government, business, public interest groups, civic associations, and individual citizens. The team will be responsible for working with NREL pre- and post-site visit, and working with the applicant to ensure all appropriate stakeholders are represented in the assistance.

For more information on RE-Powering America's Land, please visit EPA's RE-Powering Web site at:
http://www.epa.gov/renewableenergyland.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITY

Through its *RE-Powering America's Land: Siting Renewable Energy on Potentially Contaminated Land and Mine Sites* initiative, EPA identified more than 11,000 EPA tracked sites and nearly 15 million acres that have potential for developing solar, wind, biomass and geothermal facilities. EPA and NREL are conducting feasibility studies of developing renewable energy production on Superfund, brownfields, RCRA Corrective Action, and former landfill or mining sites.

EPA is offering direct technical assistance from NREL to communities and states that want to incorporate renewable resources on their contaminated sites. Selected communities or states will receive assistance, first in the form of a site visit from NREL's experts. EPA will provide this assistance through an Inter-Agency Agreement with NREL, not a grant. NREL will engage with state or local staff to study the specific site, and meet with elected officials, business leaders, citizen organizations and representatives of other stakeholder groups as needed. Second, upon completion of the analysis, the applicant will receive a final report developed by NREL that explains the best renewable energy technology for the site including specifications for the system, the optimal location for placement of the renewable energy technology on the site, potential energy generating capacity, capital costs, the return on the investment, and the economic feasibility of the renewable energy projects.

Additionally, EPA will offer assistance by providing advice on site cleanup and liability concerns and provide assistance throughout the permitting process.

EPA plans to assist approximately 20 communities in 2011. EPA anticipates announcing the selected communities in 2011, and working with the communities over a period of 12-24 months.

U.S. EPA must receive applications by 5:00 p.m. ET, 05/20/2011.

PROCESS FOR SELECTION

EPA will evaluate applications based on the criteria listed below. Project descriptions should be detailed and clearly identify the current or formerly contaminated site and the specific activities that would be most helpful from the EPA/NREL team. Applicants must first meet Threshold Criterion listed below. If applicants meet the Threshold Criteria, the proposals will be reviewed and ranked by EPA. Following this initial review, EPA will provide promising applicant materials to NREL to conduct an initial screening prior to selection based on information provided by applicant in question 2 below, GIS programs, and state and local incentives. NREL will categorize each proposal as high, medium, or low likelihood of success. EPA will make final selections after reviewing information presented by NREL. Additionally, when making the final decisions, EPA will consider regional and programmatic distribution as well as the diversity of renewable energy technologies.

THRESHOLD CRITERIA

1. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY: *The applicant must be (1) a tribal, state, local, or regional government; or (2) an incorporated nonprofit organization incorporated or domiciled in the United States or an academic institution that has a demonstrated partnership with a governmental agency.* Applicants must be located in, and project activities must be conducted within, the United States, Puerto Rico, or a territory or possession of the U.S.

2. SITE ELIGIBILITY: *The applicant must demonstrate the site is a current or former contaminated site and is suitable for the renewable energy type proposed. If known, please specify whether the site is a Superfund site, a brownfield, a RCRA Corrective Action site, a landfill, abandoned mind land, etc.* The site does not have to be a site of federal interest. Sites with state involvement or potentially contaminated sites will be considered.

3. LETTER FROM SITE OWNER: *Site owner must support this project and be committed to its success.* The response to this request for applications will require a letter of support from the owner of the site.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. *Need for EPA/NREL assistance.* Explain why support from EPA and NREL is critical to the development of a renewable energy project at the site. If technical support is not granted, would the project likely succeed anyway?

2. *Describe site history and explain the characteristics of the site that may make it suitable for the renewable energy type proposed.* Provide the latitude and longitude of the site if possible. If latitude and are unknown, provide a detailed site address. Describe site history, contamination at the site, history of any assessment or cleanup work at the site, and current status. If cleanup at the site is needed, please explain if there is a cleanup plan in place, how the renewable energy installation would fit into that plan, interaction with regulatory agencies on the cleanup, and

plans to involve the public. Describe site location, approximate total acreage of site, proposed acreage for siting renewable energy, slope, known information on resource availability of proposed renewable energy type, any foreseen potential impediments to locating renewable energy at this location, any remaining structures, and any significant features of the site. When possible, include site images and site maps. If any electricity is consumed onsite, provide the amount consumed per month, the local utility rates, and the name of the local utility. Provide information on any renewable energy feasibility studies that have been conducted or are planned for the site.

3. Interest from the local utility. To what extent has the local utility been involved in the project? To what extent has the utility committed to collaborating on this project on purchasing the renewable energy? Please provide a letter of support from the local utility. If you are unable to provide a letter, what is your plan for involving the local utility in the renewable energy project?

4. *Explain how this project relates to a broader plan for the area.* Describe how this renewable energy project fits into the municipality's long-term plans for this site, neighborhood, or community. Explain your plan for using the feasibility study once it is complete.

5. *The project is transferable and useful to other geographic locations.* Identify any likely findings or obstacles that may be useful at other sites.

6. *Although this assistance will be free to the applicant, communities, regional government and states that show commitment through partnerships, such as local government staff time, support from local businesses, and other local resources, will have priority in the selection process.* Applicants should include a list of supporters and describe any previous collaborations on environmental issues, or growth and development issues, if applicable. Applicants should also mention any potential matching funds and other technical assistance programs or grants for which they may be applying.

7. *Demonstrate Community Engagement and Partnerships.* Describe 1) your plan to engage the targeted community in the project and 2) the extent to which you have developed relationships with partners. Include letters of support from community-based organizations and other partners as part of your application.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

To be considered complete and eligible for review, all applications must include a summary page, cover letter, project description, letter of support from the community's main elected official or agency decision official, and documentation of partner participation. All parts of the application must be submitted together. The following format is required:

<u>Summary Page (no longer than one page)</u>
The summary page should include the project title, name and contact information for the project manager, type of renewable energy feasibility requested, and a brief description of the proposed

project. If a non-profit organization or academic institution is submitting the application, then the name and contact information for the governmental partner must also be provided.

Cover letter (does not count against page limit)
The cover letter that accompanies your application must be signed by an official with the authority to commit your government, agency or organization to the project and should be written on your official letterhead.

Project description (no longer than six single pages (three double sided pages))
The request for assistance must describe the project clearly and specifically. The narrative must provide a concise overview of the project, including the current conditions at the site and how EPA/NREL assistance will support the project. The narrative must address how the applicant meets the threshold and evaluation criteria. If other project partners or funding sources are involved, their role and contribution must be clearly defined. In reviewing the project description, reviewers will not consider any pages over the six page limit. Project descriptions must use no smaller than 11-point type and should have page margins all around of at least one inch.

Letter of support from elected official (not included in page limit)
Applicants must include a letter of support from the primary elected official in the community (e.g., mayor, county commission chair). If the applicant is a state government agency, the letter should be from the head of the agency or an elected official. Also include a list of other stakeholders who support the project; letters from these people are not required. Please include these materials with the application.

Documentation of partner participation (not included in page limit)
Applicants should include letters of support from the principal partners in the local team that will be assisting the EPA/NREL team and directing follow-up activities. Please include these letters with the application. Principal partners will be expected to participate in a conference call for the finalists.

DUE DATE AND MAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Applications are due 05/20/2011 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET). Applicants may submit their applications via email, through the U.S. Postal Service, or commercial delivery service. **Email is the preferred delivery method.** Only one method should be used for the submission of the original, complete application.

Electronic Submissions Applications
Email must be submitted to mail box **matthews.lura@epa.gov** and be received by 5:00 p.m. ET on **05/20/2011**. **Applications received after 5:00 p.m. ET on 05/20/2011 will not be considered. All required documents must be attached to the email as a scanned Adobe PDF file.** Please note that if you choose to submit your materials via email, you are accepting all risks attendant to email submission including server delays and transmission difficulties. Email submissions exceeding 15MB will experience transmission delays when they are received by the

Agency. For these size submissions, applicants should submit the application materials via hardcopy because if they are sent via email, they may be received late and not considered for funding.

Hard Copy Submissions Applications

Hard copy must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or received in the EPA program office via commercial delivery service by **05/20/2011**, 5:00 p.m. ET. Applications must be sent to the EPA contact address listed below. **Two printed copies and a CD containing an electronic, scanned Adobe PDF file copy of the completed application are required. Applications postmarked by the USPS or received by EPA via commercial delivery service after 5:00 p.m. ET on 05/20/2011 will not be considered.**

Application Submission Address for Regular Mail (USPS):
Lura Matthews
Center for Program Analysis
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Mail Code 5101T
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20460

Application Submission Address for Express Mail/Courier Delivery:
Lura Matthews
Center for Program Analysis
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1301 Constitution Ave. NW
EPA West Building, Room 3417
Washington, DC 20004

If you have questions about this solicitation, please contact:

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